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Letter dated 24 September 1999 from the Permanent Representative of the United States Mission to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you a letter signed by 10 women foreign ministers, including Secretary of State Albright, attesting to their commitment to end trafficking in human beings, and to their support for the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the protocol on trafficking in persons, which are currently under negotiation (see annex). I would also like to bring to your attention that an additional four foreign ministers — Janet G. Bostwick of the Bahamas, Billie A. Miller of Barbados, Nadezhda Mihailova of Bulgaria, and Nyam-Osoryn Tuya of Mongolia — have endorsed the enclosed letter.

I ask that you circulate both the attached letter of the 10 foreign ministers and my transmittal note as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 107.

(*Signed*) Richard C. **Holbrooke**

99-28018 (E) 011099

Annex

Letter dated 23 September 1999 from the Foreign Ministers of El Salvador, Finland, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Mexico, the Niger, South Africa, Sweden and the United States of America

We are writing as the Foreign Ministers of 10 nations, and as concerned women, to affirm our strong support for the struggle to end the repulsive trafficking in human beings, predominantly women and children. On the edge of the twenty-first century, it is unacceptable that human beings around the world are bought and sold into situations, such as sexual exploitation, domestic servitude and debt bondage, that are little different from slavery.

Our Governments are committed to the eradication of such trafficking. To that end, we are strong supporters of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the protocol on trafficking in persons, which are currently under negotiation. Together, we call for the earliest possible completion and full implementation of the convention and protocol, and commit ourselves and our Governments to doing all that we can to achieve this goal.

We recognized the importance of close international cooperation to defeat the traffickers at every stage of their criminal activities. We pledge to build strong links among our countries to this end — and we call upon others to join us.

Finally, Mr. Secretary-General, we thank you for your leadership in focusing international attention on this heinous practice. We look forward, jointly and separately, to working with you to defeat decisively those who traffic in human lives.

We ask that you circulate this letter as a document of the General Assembly.

(*Signed*) Maria Eugenia **Brizuela de Avila**
Foreign Minister
El Salvador

(*Signed*) Tarja **Halonen**
Foreign Minister
Finland

(*Signed*) Dr. Andrea **Willi**
Foreign Minister
Principality of Liechtenstein

(*Signed*) Lydie **Polfer**
Foreign Minister
Luxembourg

(*Signed*) Lila **Ratsifandrihamanana**
Foreign Minister
Republic of Madagascar

(*Signed*) Rosario **Green Macias**
Foreign Secretary
Mexico

(*Signed*) Aichatou **Mindaoudou**
Foreign Minister
The Niger

(*Signed*) Nkosazana **Zuma**
Foreign Minister
Republic of South Africa

(*Signed*) Anna **Lindh**
Foreign Minister
Sweden

(*Signed*) Madeleine K. **Albright**
Secretary of State
United States of America